

THE Harbinger of Light.

MONTHLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO

ZOISTIC SCIENCE, FREE THOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM,
AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

"Dawn approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall hail the day."

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the least since they became mediums, although several years have elapsed, while in one case there is a decided improvement in both the physical and mental condition of the individual. As to Mr. Potter's assertion that Spiritists evade the question as to the injurious effects of mediumship, the simplest way to test that is for non-spiritualists to ask of Spiritualists the question for themselves; they will not find them reticent in replying. The first lecture is a tissue of false assertions and misrepresentations, but Mr. Potter, encouraged by its favorable reception by his confiding congregation, passes on in number two, to slander of the foulest kind. After quoting a number of texts to prove the Godhead of Christ this Reverend defamer of honest men's characters says:—"Now, last Sunday evening I told you that the Spiritists by their own confession can do nothing at all until first they throw somebody into a cataleptic fit. A disease of the nerves and brain is an absolutely necessary preliminary to the production of all their marvels." A little further on he says, in answer to the question "What think ye of Christ," that this question is not shirked by the Spiritualists, but "The whole chorus of pamphleteers and would-be prophets answer it plainly, and they answer it with one shriek of blasphemy; all the leading spiritist publications abound not only in direct denials of the divinity of Jesus, but in the foulest and most grossly spoken abuse of the practice and belief of Christians." Now, while we are prepared to admit that the majority of Spiritualist periodicals are Unitarian in their ideas, we most distinctly deny that portion of the sentence which we have italicised. The foul and grossly spoken abuse (as in the present instance) comes from the other side, the Spiritualists being the recipients, and it is not to be wondered at that some possessed of less humility than others, should occasionally retaliate upon their priestly slanderers. A little further on we are told that it is the custom of seers or mediums to put forth their doctrines as "the infallible word of the Father." This we distinctly deny, the only so-called seer that we know of who assumes this, is a local one, and he emphatically repudiates Spiritualism. But all these falsehoods are eclipsed by what follows, slanders the most vile are uttered by this man (called Reverend!) with the view of frightening his congregation and deter-

In our last issue we briefly alluded to the Rev. Mr. Potter's lecture on "The Pretensions of Spiritualism," deferring our criticisms till after the delivery of the second lecture, announced as to be delivered on November 2nd. We mentioned, however, that as far as the Rev. gentleman had gone, he displayed either gross ignorance of the subject or something worse. From what has since transpired we are reluctantly compelled to say that Mr. Potter has convicted himself of something worse than ignorance, in his endeavors to throw dust in the eyes of would-be investigators of Spiritualism. In his first lecture (not content with asserting that the investigation of Spiritualism is injurious to both mind and body), he says—"You will hardly ever get a Spiritist to answer the question whether it is so or not;" they shirk and evade the question because they know it is injurious, and the admission would be fatal to the whole system. Secondly, he asserts that catalepsy is essential to mediumship—that no communication of any kind can be obtained unless the medium is more or less cataleptic; that the certain consequences of repeated cataleptic trances are shattered nerves and softened brains, idiocy or lunacy, and death; and after these oracular misstatements he triumphantly exclaims—"So you see now the basis upon which Spiritism stands." Now, with regard to Mr. Potter's assertion that a cataleptic or semi-cataleptic condition is essential to the reception of communications or production of phenomena, we give it a most emphatic denial, and are prepared to prove our position by the evidence of numbers of intelligent investigators, whose practical experience renders Mr. Potter's unsupported assertion worthless. Secondly, with regard to trance media, we can refer Mr. Potter to the three longest developed trance mediums in Melbourne, and defy him to show that their health has suffered in

ing them from investigating. Speaking of Spiritualist writers he says "they try to persuade people like the poor Queen of Carthage in the poem—'By some specious name to veil the crime and sanctify the shame.' Such is the teaching of Spiritism; whatever fine words its professors may use, its moral system and its theological system may be summed up, by the Christian at least, in two words, and these two words are Whoredom and Blasphemy—the former is its moral code, and the latter is its creed." Taking the above outrageous falsehood for a basis, this Christian teacher points out to his flock that no matter what proof there is of the genuineness of spiritual phenomena they are unclean and abominable. He first besmears Spiritualism and Spiritualists with filth, and then says—Don't touch the nasty thing, you cannot go near it without soiling yourself. He believes a warning is needed; he believes some people experimentalize with planchette, &c., for entertainment, but this is dangerous, and should not be done on any account, it is part of "a system which has been justly stigmatized as one of the most unequivocally degrading superstitions that ever gained currency among reasonable beings, the depth of whose blasphemy and immorality is only to be equalled by the still more amazing depth of its fatuity," and, therefore, should not be approached in any possible way. He confesses that he would not like to have to assign to Spiritualism the dignity (?) of being supernatural, because that will not frighten them away from it, in fact they are more likely to tamper with it for that very reason. Now-a-days he thinks a proposition to raise the Devil would be rather attractive than otherwise. Superstition and the Devil having failed to stay the progress of Spiritualism, Mr. Potter probably thinks he is justified in falling back upon the (we had hoped obsolete) doctrine of pious fraud. We doubt very much whether the common sense of his own congregation will permit them to be hoodwinked in the way he desires; and we feel sure that the general public see through the flimsy subterfuge. The castigation he has received through the press at the hands of Messrs. Bright, Tyerman, and Terry, should teach him, at all events, the policy of adhering to truth in attacks upon those whose religious opinions are antagonistic to his theological system. However, we will give him the benefit of the pious fraud theory. He has, though unintentionally, been the means of aiding the cause of Spiritualism by bringing both sides of the question before the public, and thus out of evil cometh good. For this, Potter, we thank thee.

LEAVES FROM THE NOTE-BOOK OF A LOCAL CIRCLE.

In our January No. we gave an extract from the note-book of this circle—a communication descriptive of certain phases of life in the spirit-world. We shall from time to time continue these communications under this heading, inclusive of answers to questions, which we elsewhere in this issue invite from our readers. They are received from one of its members, entranced and under spirit control, and are taken down in shorthand.

God's blessing on you, my friends! I am glad to find you on the steady upward march, never forgetful of duty, but as a wise captain who, when he discovereth his barque to be in danger, studieth his chart and watcheth with vigilant eye each movement of the sail, and, be there but a flutter, it waketh within him a consciousness of dangers that lurk behind. This remark has a bearing upon whom? Upon you? Yes, and upon all who have an interest in the barque of truth; not more upon you

than upon ourselves, for though we have every confidence in our vessel and a sure knowledge of the ability of the captain, yet there are some doubts as to the rocks beneath the surface over which we desire to sail. This is no new figure to you; we come only repeating what we have said before, oft and oft. We come not to-night to alarm; we come only to awaken those who may slumber, and to caution all that there is more danger by far the nearer to shore you are.

One thing after another; this is a law of nature—order and harmony—they go hand in hand. God, whom we know only by his infinitude, only by his exactness, his immutability, moveth and directeth the whole universe. The psalmist, who lived ages gone past, spoke of God holding the earth, as it were, in the hollow of his hand. The mind that could grasp such an idea was a great one, but infinitely greater are those who can grasp God's holding the universe in his fingers—who speaketh and his voice is not heard, though the whole universe respond; but one expression from that infinite mind thrills with electric rapidity the whole system of the universe, which it is as impossible for you to grasp as to count the sand in the ocean bed. Yet it is so. God must remain to the mind of man inconceivable, however great that mind may be, though countless years ennoble his majestic intellect; the germ that is now within the body of your great man on earth hath but taken the form of a life-bud, and shows forth its first tiny leaf; only indicative of some great power to which it will yet develop in the spheres. We see in the works of God, that which the whole time of eternity cannot fathom, cannot understand; yet every moment giveth new light, every instant addeth one more germ of truth that will occupy ages to develop in the mind of the spirit. To know this, to know all the laws that spring from life, is to know God; to know him, in the faintest degree, is to know the immutable, the infinitely immutable law.

How painful it is to look down upon earth and see the intellect of man misused as it is—not because of its depravity—nay, the darkest spots upon the earth's surface are those that should be brightest. To take the unfortunate man who debases his being, his noble character, by the use of intoxicating liquors; he may be reduced but little, because, perhaps, he never was much, but he* who partaketh of another potent dose, and turning from the high position he hath attained, hurleth down his spirit to a stage equally low, because equally incapable of reason—is a sight we weep to see. Yet God is just; yet men will progress; yet will he find out that the greatest law of nature, the greatest gift to man, is that mental digestion that all possess but the diseased. And unfortunate as it may seem that nature should, in its development, have so framed the human brain as to make it capable of acting as an instrument, it is better so than that, by any less excusable means the intellect be injured in the same manner. It has always been so, and it seems necessary. It aids the development of some while it retards the progress of others. And the knowledge of such in the present will do more to unravel the darkness of the past than anything else that could occur. For when such things take place now, to the ruin of intellectually great and good men, it goes far to prove the nature of similar occurrences in ages that have long passed away. It is valuable, indeed, to all who use their reason; it enables you to see the human mind as it is; it is a telescope, through which you may look into the distant past. In it you may see all the reformers, with their glimmerings of truth; in it you will see the same feelings—from beginning to end you will discern the feelings, ever more or less holding the possession and control of reason.

QUESTION.—Is it possible that this re-incarnation theory (to which your remarks have just pointed) is taught by spirits consciously?

Spirits who teach it are few indeed; they teach it from a consciousness of its truth in their own minds, but that does not prove its correctness. You have taught, in your past life—conscientiously taught and argued in favor of—ideas totally different from those you now hold

* In allusion to a well-known gentleman, whose extravagant theories upon re-incarnation, the magnetic wave, &c., had been a subject of conversation between a portion of the circle before sitting.

and hold truly, notwithstanding that there was, at that time, evidence on all sides of you, within you, sufficient indeed to convince you, that what you taught was not the truth. Spirits enter the spirit-world as they leave the earth. The orthodox man—thoroughly orthodox—believes his God measures six feet two; that he holdeth a position on the top of some mount, where he is surrounded by his angels, his archangels, and by the tribes that are saved. If he remain in the sphere to which his mind would cause him to migrate, nothing will occur to lead him to alter these opinions. He will find men and women who, like himself, lived on earth and experienced the same feelings that he did and does—believed the same doctrines—taught them perhaps, and conversing together, they have already formed an opinion, before he arrived, that their state is preparatory, that they are waiting their full time, when God shall send forth his angel, with trumpet in hand, to awaken those on earth; when the world shall be consumed, and there shall be the great resurrection of all. And so they pass on, or rather they stay, and time passes on, and those who have entered the spirit-world free from such dogmas pass on—and they are still enveloped in the same cloud that overhung them when their eyes closed upon the sun-light, or the faint, glimmering light of a candle, in their bedchamber. What will they teach if they return to earth, but the same dogmas they believe? They have plenty of authorities to quote; plenty of bishops, and priests, and deacons, who have been known for ages back: there all wait, there all think, all *know* that the time is fast approaching when they shall be received into eternal glory. You have only another phase of the same theme when any other doctrine is taught. Reincarnation is not a fact as it is taught by some who profess it; rather call it annihilation, for neither is true. I have explained it before in this way. Those who believe it and communicate it to earth, were evidently not re-incarnated—perhaps there was no necessity. However, among the countless human beings who die may be found some having the similitude of men, yet they have not developed the principle we call man. Inasmuch as we call every creature that is developed a spirit, whatever degree it may be, whatever color, it is still human, and wherever this being is found there is a sphere corresponding to it, in which it must dwell, from which it must progress. But there are beings that have not developed, and these, like all other animals, die by the immutable law of nature; but there is no passing away of the spirit in that case—in the form of a spirit—but, as an emanation from the vital principle, it is lost, scattered, as the atmosphere is scattered, or as chaff in the wind, passing back to those forms in nature which have an attraction for such particles. It may be that, in company with other particles to which it is attached, it may in this next stage of development unfold the principle we call spirit. You may find such creatures—or such animals, is perhaps the better term—in all, or nearly all countries, more especially in the uncivilised, yet, bear in mind that there are men, or spirits, covered with colored skins, who are far advanced in the spiritual scale; and though they may not possess that we call civilisation, they have that we call development; the one is real, the other artificial.

QUESTION.—May it be that re-incarnation is taught by spirits while under the influence of the despair that might arise from a conviction of their own unworthiness, or unsuitableness for immortal existence?

No; spirits who conceive that sense of unworthiness start immediately for the upward path. It is a most hopeful condition of mind for any one, either in the body or out of the body, to feel that life has been a hopeless waste, inasmuch as they must see where the waste has taken place, where the weakness lies, and the course it would lead them did they continue to follow it. I will take you back into your own past experience, and ask you if there has not been a time when you have wandered from the close atmosphere of the orthodox assembly? You too have had strange thoughts, and there has been a faint, glimmering light that told you "It is better for me to be here than where I was." There were doubts, conflicts, in the mind, certainly; yet there was some sort of feeling that would lead you away still further. And now, some bright light would steal over

you, and it may be in that light you perceive the hand with power to lead you even further yet—where the atmosphere will be more congenial to your nature—to streams of living waters, where you may drink and thirst no more. Thus it is also in the spirit-world. Those who watch over the same spheres on earth watch over them here. The cloud-darkened eyes of superstition that blind the believer in theology on earth, are as effectually blinding to those in the spheres, and the spirit that would now appear to you as bright as the sun in the firmament, who could talk to you face to face, and in whose society you could find harmony and happiness, but a short time ago would have been as unseen as we are now unseen by you. And so we attach ourselves to some of these thinking kind, so we pour our influence upon the heads of those who have the faintest shadow of reason, and excite their reason. If that is once accomplished, if only a small crevice be opened, it lets in the light, and the light, once into the obscure chamber, sheweth the dismal pictures upon the walls. Almost horrified, they rush anywhere rather than back to the flock, and there are always plenty who will meet them, for the further they come away the more power have we to lead them into circles suited to their new, their changed condition. This very belief, and there is a step in the upward path. It takes place now more often than it did a few years past, for there are so many more who have left earth having some faint traces of a progressive nature, and require but to separate themselves for a short period, to think over what they have heard, and the possibility of some yet higher state—something still beyond. This already fills the spirit-land with a new and glorious light; they do not remain so long in the spheres now as they did years back, and soon—we make use of the word soon in our sense certainly—soon these spheres will be no more, for we see clearly the rapid downfall of unreasoning, blind theology.

Poetry.

THE ARK.

I.

MINGLING and co-mingling animal and mind intact

As angel thought with man's—'tis man's first duty

To hold them close related although distinct, in fact,

As light from plants which gives them all their beauty;

Nor glory more in their relationship; else were all

Forces misdirected, and aims all disconcerted;

Compulsion itself repulsed; man God over all;

Man both God and Nature by which he is created.

II.

The opening bud desires and liveth on the light and

Heat by which 'tis cherished, nor doth critically demand

The proofs of their existence in their separate forms,

Nor yet to know the phases of their lives and homes,

And the young soul bathed in effulgence from the spheres

When first it tastes the light of the eternal years

With which the heavens awake it from unconsciousness

To know the everlasting truth—dictates not but obeys;

Demands not but receives; yet hopes and still aspires,

And thirsts for truth e'en as the bud the light desires.

III.

Then back to the ark from whence I wildly fled,

Back from the Babel of ten thousand tongues;

Back to the spheres of holiness and love,

Back to aspirations and to hopes ahead.

Too great to compass, and to high to understand,

My growing powers I yield to the Almighty's hand.

"ALPHA."

To Correspondents.

Communications for insertion in this Journal should be plainly written, and as concise as possible.

THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—A recommendation, in the *Age* of Feb. 12th, "to the Spiritualists of Melbourne that they should confer together and agree to a plain practical statement of their views on the question of Marriage," seems to me to have been made too publicly to be passed without notice.

As one of the Spiritualists of Melbourne, I, at least should much disapprove of any such conference. I should not expect to impose my views upon it and I should be very unwilling to have its views—which could not fail to be a medley,—affixed to me, as mine.

Every statement of opinions held by a number of persons must either be a medley, or a compromise effected by each giving up, or repressing, some of their thoughts. No two mortal beings ever thought exactly alike on any matter of belief. Either they resign themselves more or less completely to the guidance of others and do not think at all, or thinking for themselves they needs must differ widely from one another.

This is one of many reasons why creeds and formulas on any point of belief, are worse than vain, they are positively injurious to mental and spiritual development. But creeds for Spiritualists must be peculiarly difficult to frame and unacceptable when done, for there is no sect of religion, no diversity of thought from which we have not some converts. You might as well ask all the animals of Noah's ark to live on chaff as Spiritualists to pin themselves to a creed, or indeed to "a plain statement of agreement" on any point of opinion or belief. I am myself personally acquainted with avowed Spiritualists who are at the same time devout Roman Catholics, rigid Anglicans, Unitarians, Wesleyans, &c., &c. It is not to be expected that all these people will think alike upon any subject. No, not even upon communication with spirits, the fact, they are all agreed upon, but their opinions about it are nearly as multiform as their personalities.

From my own experience, I should judge that most Spiritualists believe and act upon the principle that one husband to one wife is the best form of marriage, yet developed upon earth; they do this not because they are Spiritualists but because they are men and women of the 19th century. It is also true that many of them think marriage is not holy—and therefore not marriage—when it is a mere matter of money or ambition on either side; but this is not a doctrine peculiar to Spiritualists, it is held by many earnest thinking people, who care nothing for Spiritualism. Unhappy marriages are beyond doubt the sources not only of much misery but of much evil of many other kinds.

It seems to me that the best—the only thing to seek and to hope for, is such a perfect knowledge of the true, immutable laws,—mental and physical, that govern marriage as shall make our present blundering system of choosing mates hap-hazard, an act of almost impossible stupidity and ignorance. That such laws exist, I believe, because I believe nothing of God's designing to be without perfect law, that we are yet ignorant of them is only too sadly certain from much that we see around us. Only when we attain to some such knowledge can marriage be well regulated and certainly happy. Till then, every marriage however indissoluble, is an experiment.

Meantime, I cannot for the life of me, see why we Spiritualists for ourselves, or others for us, should trouble so very much about the beliefs of Mrs. Woodhull, or Mr. Bright, or Mr. Potter, or the "Age" they are all but matters of opinion, as variable as the wind. Let us live right and injure no one and in the end we shall refute calumny.

ENOCH ASTER.

THE "BANNER OF LIGHT" FUND.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—I herewith enclose my mite, three dollars, (12s. 6d.) for the "Banner of Light" fund.

I sincerely hope that the good old Banner will again soon be unfurled to expound and defend Free thought and Spiritualism, against ignorance, bigotry, and blind faith orthodoxy.

I also desire to give my mite, 10s. 6d., towards supporting Friend Burns' Spiritual Institution, London. Such a good and useful institution, conducted so ably and by one so full of energy and disinterestedness as Friend Burns, deserves to be well supported by Spiritualists.

I am, &c.,
J. S.

Castlemaine,

February 21st, 1873.

[We thank our correspondent J. S. on behalf of the "Banner" and "Friend Burns." We trust his laudable example may be followed by others. We shall be happy to receive and forward subscriptions to their respective destinations.—Ed. H. L.]

MR. DENOVA'S ADDRESS AT SANDHURST.

Mr. W. D. C. Denovan delivered the second lecture of a series entitled "Scientific objections to Spiritualism Considered," at the Rifle Orderly Room Sandhurst, on Sunday, Feb., 16th, to a numerous and highly respectable audience. The lecture is fully reported in the *Bendigo Evening Star*, of the 17th, from which we give a few excerpts. Prior to the commencement of the lecture, Addison's Grand Hymn "The spacious Firmament on High" was sung with good effect by an excellent choir. Mr. Denovan then said:—"Friends,—In my former lecture on "The Evidences of Spiritualism," I endeavoured to prove that the extraordinary phenomena occurring at circles, in all nations, were genuine, and were produced by the spirits of our departed friends and relatives, who, by means of a great natural law of God, of which we are ignorant, were, though absent in the body, still able to communicate with us. I pointed out to you that in former ages, by means of this law, spirits held daily converse with men; and that if it were denied that they could do so in the present age, it would be incumbent on our opponents to prove when this law became inoperative, by whom it was rendered so, and for what wise purpose so beneficent a provision of nature was set aside. I also drew your attention to the present state of Christianity—to the wide-spread unbelief in the truth of divine revelation which prevails amongst the educated classes, and the necessity which exists for a new revelation, with a view of converting materialists and sceptics to a belief in God and a life to come. Spiritualism, as I showed you, had already been instrumental, to a very great extent, in bringing about the conversion of many thousands of "infidels" in all those countries where it had obtained a footing, and was understood by the people; and that as its truth was established by the most incontestible evidence from all quarters, and by all ranks and conditions of men, it was only fair, before being condemned by you, that it should be subjected to the crucial test of an honest and impartial investigation.

To-night, in accordance with my promise, I proceed to consider "The Leading Scientific Objections to Spiritualism." And in the discharge of this duty, permit me to assure you of my desire to act honestly and impartially in the matter. I would most respectfully remind you that if Spiritualism be not true, and the objections urged against it are capable of proof, then before the arguments of the materialists, believers in the immortality of the soul will have to bow their heads; because if the living evidence in favor of this all-important doctrine is to be rejected (for such evidence is from the very nature of things, the most convincing), the dead evidence must also fail. Hence the vital importance to all believers in God, and a life beyond the present of the truth of Spiritualism.

The first objection I will deal with, is as follows :—

"The phenomena produced at circles, if genuine, are the result of brain force." Now, let us examine this objection carefully, and see if it is correct. Before this opinion can be received in elucidation of the phenomena, its advocates will require to prove to the satisfaction of the public what brain force is, how it can raise and suspend heavy bodies in the air without human contact, how loud raps on the tables, chairs, doors, and the walls of rooms, are produced by it, and how things are related at circles, through mediums, of which none present have any knowledge, but which are afterwards found to be strictly correct; and how it conjures up the spirits to visibly shew themselves to mortals. That these phenomena are not the result of brain force, I shall now endeavour to show."

In support of his position the lecturer quoted Robert Dale Owen, and Professor Crookes to good purpose, he afterwards analyzed the "Unconscious Cerebration" theory and most conclusively demolished it by an overwhelming weight of evidence. He then continues—"As Spiritualists say," in the language of the Duke of Somerset, "Men who have been carefully trained to distrust authority, and to rely for the acquisition of knowledge upon experiment, analysis, and patient research, cannot subsequently divest themselves of a habit of mind which has become a part of their nature. They must either suppress and relinquish all religious thought, or they must apply to the records of revealed religion, the same spirit of investigation, which has already re-opened the sources of history, and extended the domain of science." This position though it may and is assailed by the clergy, is an impregnable one; and as education becomes the heritage of all, it must of necessity be the popular one. Spiritualists desire to respect the consciences of all, but openly proclaim on the house-tops their rejection and disbelief in all the leading tenets of orthodoxy. They reject the story of the Fall. They denounce as blasphemy the horrible doctrine of a devil rampant and an endless hell, refusing in the words of Gerald Massey, to "accept the notion that God cursed the whole creation on account of the trespass of one man and woman." They substitute God's law of progress for that of the vicarious sacrifice, and whilst discarding the doctrine of the Trinity, believe in the beautiful philosophy of Jesus, as a divine code which if men would but follow, would lead to happiness here and hereafter. They also teach the gradual substitution of the authority of the parents and Schoolmasters for that of the clergy, honestly looking upon the clerical order as the remnants of the old systems of Government—a sort of moral police—which the growing intelligence, and self-respect of the people will soon enable them to do without. The progressive spiritualist is courageous enough to stand up and tell the whole Christian priesthood that they must either ally themselves with the progressive spirit of the age, or become reconciled to the fact of their authority and influence being gradually sapped and destroyed. People are beginning to see that practical religion—the religion of love and good works—is of far more importance to humanity at large, than a mere adherence to old systems of belief or articles of faith, which have served their day and generation, but which, as man progresses, in a knowledge of the laws of his being and rises higher in the scale of civilization, are no longer adapted to either his aspirations, or his circumstances. There are at this moment vast forces of men and women both inside and outside of all religious systems and belonging to all sections of society convinced that the year is ripe for sweeping changes both in church and state; and these forces have long ceased to believe in the necessity for keeping up an immense army of professional clergymen, or their nostrums. These forces—heretical in the eyes of the church, no doubt, believe that the schoolmaster is a far more useful person to society, than the clergyman, and all progressive Spiritualists join with them in this opinion, and in helping forward the noble work of reformation and education. But Spiritualists believe at the same time in the necessity for training up the young in a simple love of God the Great Father of all, and in teaching

them beautiful lessons of virtue and religion. And, they therefore, urge upon all parents the duty of setting a good example to their children. Love to God and to your neighbour, as Jesus our elder brother taught, is the sum and substance of all true religion, and where this prevails in the heart and life, creeds, forms and ceremonies, are of secondary importance. The dogma of the life beyond the grave where taught as the result of a belief founded upon evidence and knowledge of its truth, tends to reconcile and discipline the human family to an endurance of all the vicissitudes of this chequered life. All who are fortunate enough to possess this knowledge—and it is the heritage of all—feel their sympathies enlarged, and their love to God and man vitalised. In the language of Gerald Massey, the poet: "Ours is a faith, with all spirit-world about us as witnesses; a positive, vitalising faith in a living, communicating God." See to it, then, Spiritualists, that when in a spirit of love for all, you go forward seeking in your several ways to right the wrongs of humanity, you exhibit this faith in all you say and do.

* * * * *

And now, friends, in drawing this lecture to a close, let me ask you to dismiss from your minds all the silly things you have heard spoken and written against Spiritualism—the new science of the nineteenth century—and resolve calmly and deliberately to give it a fair and patient investigation, either in your families or in private circles. Do not, as reasonable and responsible beings, allow prejudice to interfere with this duty. I would most respectfully remind you that those who have already done so belong to all ranks and conditions of men, whose judgment and discernment are as good as your own; whose purpose is noble and disinterested, and who would not knowingly give their countenance to this cause did they not firmly believe it to be a righteous one. Of course the clergy will call its pioneers "blasphemers and infidels." What of that? Did not the priests of the old religions of the time say the same of Jesus? Have they not said the same of the advocates of every new truth which had a tendency to increase the knowledge and independence of the people? At the time of the death of Jesus his followers did not even amount to hundreds; scarce "none so poor as do him reverence." And yet He who was crowned with thorns and spat upon is honored to-day, eighteen hundred years after his life ended on the cross, with the homage of nearly four hundred millions of the human family. Look, too, what our philosophers and scientists have been doing in every department of science during the last hundred years. In Geology, in Astronomy, the mysterious and buried history of the heavens and the earth is being gradually brought to light; and instead of true religion suffering from these researches, it is deriving new life and vigor though diverted, as a natural consequence, into other and nobler channels; and mankind stand dumbfounded before these evidences of the majesty and wisdom of the Great Architect of the Universe, whose omnipotence and glory "the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain." With a new world opened to our view, which the divine portion of man's nature has enabled him to discover, shall it be said that the end of it shall be decay and death? Is the grave to swallow up for ever the spirits of such men as Columbus, Shakespeare, Milton, Washington, Bacon, Luther, Wilberforce, Scott, &c., &c.—men whose genius and greatness shed an imperishable lustre of glory on their names and nations, and whose services to humanity have been of world-wide renown? Alas! if such were the case, why were we gifted with reason and placed at the head of creation as "the noblest work of God?" Perish such an ignoble thought! Man lives and preserves his identity after death! Matter—his physical body—returns to the dust from whence it sprang; but the spiritual body, which preserves all that's beautiful and good within us, lives as the Eternal One himself. This is the great truth which Spiritualism wishes to bring home to our senses. And on the ladder of magnetism and electricity which the angels have formed between earth and

heaven, and in obedience to God's law of affinity, there comes to us thousands of

"The beloved ones, the true hearted,
Come to visit us once more."

to tell us of the life beyond the grave, and of the glories that await us in our new homes in the higher spheres. These divine messengers give us good counsel; telling us to live noble lives if we would be happy here and hereafter. The clergymen say that it is all the work of the Devil. Well, all I have to say in reply to this is: if it be his Satanic Majesty, he must have got converted, for most assuredly he is doing the work of the other side. What a curious old fellow this Devil must be. Would Darwin or Buckle tell us if he has got a tail, and whether—as he appears to be ubiquitous—he ever appears in the pulpit in a surplice? Then, it is said to be all a delusion, the thousands who testify to what they have seen and heard, having been deceived. Now, let me reply to this in the words of the late Dr. Robert Chambers, who was a devoted spiritualist. He says:

"A little modesty would evidently go a great way to solve the difficulty which the incredulous profess to feel on this point. If they would so far yield to the behests of their favorite philosophy as to enquire before pronouncing, it might chance that the position of a believer in these phenomena would become more intelligible to them. So at least, it has already happened with a vast number of persons, equally positive, at starting, that the whole was a delusion, and we are entitled to assume that what has been, may be so again."

Friends, I beg to thank you for the undivided attention you have given me throughout the lecture, and commend what I have said to your favorable consideration. "I speak as unto wise men; judge ye what I say."

HELL AND THE DEVIL.

(From E. V. Wilson's *Western Tour. R. P. Journal.*)

Tuesday, August 13th, we left for home, arriving Wednesday, 7:06 P.M. On the night train from Quincy (C., B. & Q. R. R.), we were saluted with a stone through the window of the sleeping car, that made the glass fly and caused a good deal of excitement amongst the passengers. While waiting in the Depot, at Quincy, Illinois, we took from our pocket a copy of our beloved RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL, and, while reading Dr. Childs' department, felt the ominous influence of an evil Spirit. On looking up, there stood before us a solemn-looking individual of the *genus homo*, with a suicidal look in his face, dressed in a dark suit of cloth, that hung around his form like a shirt on a bean pole. He wore a pair of green glasses, and a plug hat that was somewhat the worse for wear. After looking at each other for a few seconds, he accosted us in a lugubrious tone, thus: "Are you a Christian, Old man?"

"No sir!"

"Do you love Jesus?"

"Better than we do you, and not so well as we do Farmer Mary."

"Who is Farmer Mary?"

"She is, my Mother," said little Lulu, our flaxen-haired pet, and the good little wife we live with when at home, we replied,

"What are you reading, sir?"

"That very excellent, truth-telling, heaven-inspired, God-approved RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL."

"Where is it published?"

"In the city that God burned last October."

"O-o-h-h-h-h."

"Who are its publishers and editors?"

"The Infidel Jones, God-Searching Francis, the Quaker Child, Chemical Carr, and the 'gentle' Wilson, assisted by a great cloud of helpers, men and women, whose 'names are legion.'"

"Will you subscribe for our paper," handing him one? After perusing it a few moments, he looked up from the paper and said:

"Sir, this paper is a Spiritual paper."

"Yes sir! Your head is level this time. Do you believe in Spiritualism?"

"No, sir! We know no Spiritualism."

"What? We know that Spiritualism is true."

"Well, I believe it to be the work of the Devil."

"Who is the Devil, Papa," asked our little pet Lulu?"

"An imaginary being that this man and his brethren keep in their cellars, attics and dark rooms, to keep them in the fear of God, and make them be good men and women."

"My Child."

"No! I am not your child," said Lulu.

"Hem—I am afraid you do not know who and what the Devil is, little girl."

"Have we got any Devil, Papa?"

"Yes, my child! Those little rag-weeds and pig-weeds in our fields are devil's weeds, that cost us many a hard day's work to get rid of; besides, when we are angry or wilful, and refuse to mind those in authority, or when we are ugly, and strike any one in anger; or when we swear, or chew, or smoke tobacco, or drink whiskey—then we have a Devil."

"Well, we can dig up the weeds and they will die, can't we?"

"Yes, my darling, and so we can dig out any other devil that we may have in us, and cast him from us; and when we are rid of him, we can easily keep clear of him by being good and truthful."

"Sir, you are teaching that child the road to Hell!"

"Where is Hell, Papa?"

"In that man's brain, mouth, in his home and religion, my child."

"Well," said Lulu, after thinking a little, "it is a very nasty place."

"Yes, child, filled with tobacco, cigar smoke and whiskey."

"Well, sir, it is my own business, if I do chew tobacco."

"Yes, sir, and it's your own business if you go to Hell."

Come, my child, let us go out and look at the silent river flowing on to the sea. Turning to leave the house, a very pleasant looking lady touched us on the shoulder, and asked us to explain to her the Gospel of Spiritualism. Again we seated ourselves, and, like one of old, preached the peace and truth of Spiritualism to more than a score of enquiring souls.

Then rang the gong for supper, after which we left for home.

And the last we saw of our lugubrious friend with hell on the brain, he was striding slowly out of the room, to bore some one else as he had bored all in the depot.

God speed the day
When Hell no longer
Holds its fiery way:
When souls will hunger
For the royal light
Of our sacred Spiritual high way.

A GOOD RING-TEST.

To the Editor of the *Medium and Daybreak.*

SIR,—A seance was held at my house last evening. There were present ten persons, including Mr. Williams (the medium). A gentleman, who is almost a stranger to Spiritualism, brought with him an iron ring, in diameter about 2½ in. This was placed on the table around which the company sat, all joining hands. Suffice it to say, that in addition to other remarkable phenomena, this small ring was placed on Mr. Williams' wrist, and after we had examined it in the light it was taken off. This is indeed a most wonderful test. Not only was it accomplished whilst the medium's hands were held, but the ring was too small to pass over his hand. Surely this manifestation compares favorably with Mrs. Holmes's. Mr. Williams deserves the best thanks of Spiritualists for always courting stringent test-conditions.—Yours, &c.,

New Wandsworth, S.W. DAVID H. WILSON, B.A.
Nov. 20th, 1872.

THE DEVIL IS COMING !

A STARTLING "MAGNETIC" REVELATION.

His Satanic Majesty is about to honour us with a special visit in a very extraordinary character. Christians have long credited him with marvellous powers. He is believed to be able to transform himself into anything, from a snake to an angel of light, that would best enable him to accomplish his infernal purposes upon mankind. But all his past feats are going to be thrown into the shade by the next sensational act on the programme of his strange career. He is about to transform himself, or some one else is about to transform him, into a *visible, embodied inhabitant of this mundane sphere*: not, however, to beguile the "Innocents" as he did our Eden ancestors; nor to inflict "sore boils" on well-to-do people as he did upon rich and patient Job; nor to transport men bodily to the "pinnacle" of some "temple," or the summit of some "exceeding high mountain," as he did Jesus Christ; but to "receive the judgment in the flesh" for all the naughty things he has done, and caused others to do. There can be no mistake about this wonderful phenomenon being included in the thousand and one things that are shortly coming to pass. The oracle has spoken, and announced the "coming event" in the most plain and positive terms:—"The devil and his angels will be incarnated in human bodies."

Our good friend Mr. James Smith has lately been trying, with a lavish expenditure of ink and paper, to convince the world how much wiser he is than his contemporaries, and all the past generations of men. He has penetrated the arcana of what he calls truth, and laid bare the precious mud treasures hitherto hid from mortal vision. He has touched with his "magnetic" wand books that have been sealed to the rest of mankind for ages past, and lo! their seals have instantly cracked; their leaves have promptly opened; and their contents have forthwith stood out in the most glorious confusion. With a single stroke of his pen he has solved profound problems with which the most illustrious of the mighty dead vainly racked their brains, and died in despair of solving; and, thanks to the lucidity of his expositions, the veriest noodle can now see that they are infinitely more muddled and perplexing than ever. And what less could be expected than revelations which on the one hand show the "ignorance" of all past knowledge, and on the other the magnificent heritage of incomprehensibilities awaiting mankind, from one who claims to be the special mouthpiece of the "Most High?" Prophets are always in a fog.

Re-incarnation has been the favourite subject with Mr. Smith of late. Mother Jackson—I beg pardon—"the Father" assures him it is a "truth." And is not the Bible full of it? The fact that no one else ever found it there but himself is only a trifling consideration. Only one man ever discovered a way to the moon, and he has been on it ever since. There is a little difficulty, however, in dealing with the subject so long as it is confined to the authority of the Bible and Mr. Smith. He may succeed in persuading those who believe the Bible, like himself, to be inspired and infallible, that it is clearly taught there, though they never saw it till he pointed it out; but unfortunately there are many who have not yet been convinced of the infallibility of either of these authorities, and they wish to hear arguments rather than oracular declarations on the subject. And for their benefit Mr. Smith has been invited, through the columns of the daily press, to descend from his *ex cathedra* position, and discuss the question on its merits, irrespective of this or that book. But he refuses to do so, preferring to remain entrenched behind the convenient fortress of "revealed truth." His tactics are at least safe. And all things considered perhaps it is as well that he should be allowed to remain there in undisturbed composure, to work out the unique system of teaching which is to do such wonders for the world. Thus securely protected he appears to be making rapid progress in the development of his one idea. Almost every letter now flashes with new light, and announces some startling discovery. The latest is that "*the devil and his angels will be incarnated in human bodies!*"

That is a capital idea,—the finest Mr. Smith has

broached for many a day. By the bye, how did he obtain it? Is he in the confidence of his Satanship, and reporting news first hand? Perhaps this will be considered too "private" a matter to be questioned about, and therefore I will pass on. If the announcement can reach the "nether region"—and I suppose some spy will catch its echo and waft it thither—it will be glorious news to its wretched, and hitherto hopeless inhabitants. If his Satanic Majesty honours the earth with a prolonged visit of say three score years and ten duration, I suspect there will be a jolly time in hell during his absence. "His angels" have to accompany him, and as both the jailer and warders will be "away on leave," there will be no one to "torment" poor lost souls, some of whom, according to St. Peter, have been in "prison" at least since the time of Noah's flood—a rather long time to be "doing a sentence." If they cannot escape during the absence of their keepers, they will surely have some slight reprieve. This will be some consolation to those who have any misgiving as to the fate of their departed friends. Let us hope that if his Majesty, accompanied by his suite of "angels," does visit us, he will be so delighted with the world that he will never return to the "dark dominion" whence he came; or if he does go back let us hope it will only be to find that his sooty subjects have revolted against his rule, and asserted their "Independence!" If the "devil" has to be "incarnated" in a "human body" he will cease to be the "father" that Mr. Smith now designates him, and become some one's child; he will have to be nursed and dandled like another child; and when he can toddle, the passage in Job about his "walking up and down on earth" will strike many minds as very applicable then.

Can Mr. Smith inform us how we shall be able to identify "Auld Clootie" when he honours us with his presence in bodily form? Will he wear a tail and sport a pair of horns? I suppose his dress will be left to the taste of the parents of the "body" he will inhabit. Mothers should be looking out. The rare honour awaits some of them of introducing to the world that illustrious person whom St. Paul speaks of as "the Prince of the power of the air." When the "Prince" is visible among us I venture to say the opinion of most people respecting him will be considerably modified. Many a feeble, cowardly creature, who has not the courage or strength to bear the blame of his own shortcomings, will owe him an apology, for having laid so many sins on his back, of which he was innocent. Some of those zealous Christians who have said such hard things of him behind his back will no doubt raise their hats as the "Prince" passes them. The churches could not do better than try to "convert" him while here. Such an object would be worth a few "special prayer meetings." Our orthodox friends will perhaps take the hint, and make timely arrangements. If they could get the devil converted, the work of saving the world would be more than half accomplished, for he is admittedly the chief hindrance to the spread of the gospel. In my late lecture on the "Devil" I suggested special prayer for him, contending that he is still one of "the Father's" children, though a fallen one, and that I could not consider him beyond the reach of mercy so long as I believed God to be a God of love. And yet there would be some trouble in securing his salvation while beyond the reach of the gospel, as he must be in hell; but that cause of doubt will be removed when he becomes an embodied sojourner in a Christian country. I foresee one difficulty, however, which our friends will do well to take into account before they set about that desirable work. If they make "Auld Clootie" a Christian when he visits us who will they have to blame for the temptations and sins they will still be likely to fall into? Perhaps Mr. Smith will help them out of this difficulty.

In dismissing this subject I must say that much as I differ from Mr. Smith I could almost wish his theory of re-incarnation were correct, because of the hope it holds out for poor "Old Harry," and indirectly for all the young Harrys, who, if they are wise, will turn the old gentleman's absence from his "brimstone" home to their own advantage, and start off in search of a "better country."

There is just another point in Mr. Smith's letter an-

nouncing the devil's approaching incarnation, to which I wish to refer, and I do this in all seriousness. He speaks of the "strong delusion" predicted by Paul, and seems to think that Spiritualism is that delusion. What a melancholy instance of theological retrogression and the re-enslavement of reason Mr. Smith furnishes. If I believed his theory of re-incarnation I should suspect that some gloomy, bigoted, little-souled Millenarian had reappeared in him, or rather had taken possession of him lately. The liberal Mr. Smith of a few years ago would have scorned the idea of imputing to God such a thing as sending part of his great family a "strong delusion," and then "damning" them for believing it. He would have declared as emphatically as any of us that a being capable of such an awful act was an execrable monster, unworthy of the name of God. Yet Mr. Smith now believes that the being with whom he holds communion is perpetrating that atrocious deed, and calls that being "the Father!" From being a liberal and rational theist he thus becomes as great a blasphemer as Paul, by imputing to God what is infinitely derogatory to his divine character and perfections. Thank heaven, the light of a clearer day has dawned upon the world; the horrible doctrines enunciated by St. Paul and echoed by Mr. Smith will vanish away; and truths more worthy of God, more in harmony with nature, and more beneficial to man, will take root and gradually transform the world into an abode of peace, liberty, and happiness.

J. TYERMAN.

ON HAPPINESS.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED TO THE MELBOURNE CHILDREN'S LYCEUM, ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1873.

I SHOULD like to talk to you to-day about how to be happy. I think it is the most important thing we can talk about. I feel sure that God means us all to be happy. It is for that he made us, and the sooner we learn the way to it the better for us, and the more truly we are attaining to the will of God.

He meant us to be happy always—not just for a day or an hour or a week, but always, with a steady happiness that will never change or grow less, but always more and more.

But how to reach that state—how to suffer as little as possible between now and then—how to help one another to it—this is what I want to talk to you about; because I think we can all help one another in this matter. Every other life that has gone before ours of which we can know anything, whether it be good and wise, or mean and low, may serve to guide or to warn us.

This life is a new road to each of us; we have never been over it before, and we must depend on the experience of those who have travelled before us, and on the landmarks left by them to guide ourselves.

In the high Alps, where the roads and villages are few and far between, the rocky chasms steep and frequent, the icy glaciers near all round you, and the mountains covered with forests for many miles together, the course of the roads and of the traversable river beds by which the traveller can reach human habitations, is marked by a very distinct white mark placed on the upper branches of the tallest trees. So is our path marked for us through life—not very easy to find—many stumblings and some weariness must necessarily be endured; but we need not quite lose our way if we look out well for the landmarks, and make no mistake about them. Be sure of that!

Now, if my experience can help any one of you, I shall have spoken to good purpose. Remember, I have told you my experience has brought the conviction that, sooner or later, every one of us is to be happy—no matter with what disposition we are born, with what infirmities we are afflicted, or in what unfortunate circumstances we are placed; these things may hinder and delay—may make us ripen into happiness more slowly—but come it must and will, and then you know the fruit that ripens slowly is often sweetest.

I once asked a very clever old Frenchman what happiness was, and he gave his idea of it by saying what it

was not. "It was not," he said, "a blue rose, for that is a thing no one ever saw, though there are persons who have wasted a good deal of time and money in trying to make such a thing grow. No, happiness is not a blue rose."

And it is not a diamond as large as a house, for no one ever found such a diamond as that, and many people have found happiness.

Happiness is much more like the monthly rose that flourishes all seasons of the year, in sunshine and in shade, in hedge rows and in gardens; it is even more like the little blades of grass that grow all round our path, along the roadside, between the stones wherever there are a few grains of earth and a little moisture to nourish them.

It is in everything; in our work even more than in our amusements; in the trifling things of every day and every hour; in the calmness, the patience, the steadfastness of spirit that we keep within ourselves as we meet those trifling things.

So long as they have power to vex or overjoy us, to embitter or to excite us, so long we cannot attain to any settled happiness. So long as we set our hearts on any particular pleasure, thinking, "Oh, if I am disappointed of that I cannot be happy; I have set my heart on this or that thing, I cannot be happy without it," we cannot be happy. You can—you may—you must be happy without those things on which you set your heart—without them—independent of them—in spite of them. No, happiness is not to be found in self-indulgence, not even in harmless pleasures.

Far rather is it in self-rule, in keeping your wishes moderate; never letting them grow so strong that they become your masters. then you become a slave to your own passionate wants and that is to be miserable.

A passionate want is one that tyrannizes over you, that drives you to do that which, but for it, you would not do. It is never satisfied; the more you give, the more it wants—the more you yield the more it drives you, rages in you, lets you have no peace. You must rule all such wants as these if you would be happy, not yield to them.

And you must be active, busy, occupied, working at something—not merely planning something you mean to do, but really at work upon it, not just dreaming about what it will look like when it is done, but really busy at it; not giving it up even if you grow a little tired of it, nor if it is difficult and troublesome, for strange as it may seem, I assure you it is the difficult and troublesome things that make one happiest—the growing strong, or wise, or skilful in doing them is so delightful.

And if you want to reach a still higher happiness than even a calm, steadfast spirit within, and an active life without, can give you, see to it that your activity is useful, not to yourself alone, but rather to others.

There was once a king who succeeded to the throne of his ancestors under the brightest auspices. His father had governed the country well, and left it prosperous. The young man himself was beloved by all his subjects, the country was rich and at peace, and everyone looked for continued prosperity. Everything promised the fullness of enjoyment. The young king was of such a disposition that he much wished others to enter into his happiness. So he decreed that whenever his heart was full of joy he would pull a silken cord which hung by his bedside, and was connected with the largest bell in the city; this, in its turn was connected with all the other bells of the place, and these again communicated with the bells of the neighbouring towns and villages. Thus, when the king's heart was full of joy, he could in a moment summon all his people to share it with him. Of course, when he first became king, he was mourning for the wise and loving father whom he had just lost, and he could not then feel unmixed happiness; so the bells were not to be rung just then.

He at once began to devote himself to the interests of his people, and, as he did this, cares began to multiply.

There were enemies from without to be kept off. There were wrong doers at home to be put right. There was poverty, and sickness, and ignorance among his

people to be fought against. Sometimes his best plans were thwarted by discontented people; sometimes his most cherished projects failed. So his life was full of care, anxiety, and labour, though his reign was the most prosperous that had ever blessed his country. Thus it was that years and years went on; he passed from early manhood to old age, and never once found a time, when his heart was sufficiently free from trouble for him to ring the bells all over the country, and call his subjects to rejoice with him. At last death came; he lay with mourning friends and attendants around him waiting for his last breath, when a low sad sound reached his ear from the streets. "What is that?" he asked. "It is the people, your majesty." "The people!" cried the king, raising himself with new strength at this thought. "What is the matter, what has befallen the nation?" "Oh, they are mourning for their good king," was the reply. "The news has gone forth that your majesty is worse, and they are crowding the streets and filling the air with lamentations. At the palace gates are numbers waiting patiently to hear if there is no change for the better in your majesty's health, and the churches are filled with people, praying that you may be spared to us a little longer yet."

When the dying king heard this, he stretched forth his hand and pulled the silken cord that set the joy-bells ringing all over the country, for his heart was full of un-mixed happiness.

The life of one who works for others may be a troubled life—a life of care and weariness, but it is sure to have in it a drop of happiness, so sweet, so intensely sweet, as more than makes up for all the toil and weariness.

Try it! try it to-day, and I promise you that so soon as you know you have done an act of real usefulness to another, you will feel a thrill of happiness that you will never forget—no, it will come to you again and again, like a beautiful echo, all your life long.

One thing more I must tell you of, as sure to make you happy—it is the consciousness of growing into something more than you are yet. The boy who feels, as each new season comes round, that he is stronger than the last year, must be a dull fellow indeed if that very feeling does not make him happy—yes, happy, not merely glad.

The young girl, who finds out each day she is becoming beautiful and graceful, must be lacking both in brains and in heart if it does not thrill her with a strange and awful happiness. The prosperous merchant, who, as he grows richer and richer, does not feel that this of itself is making him happier, is a money bag and not a man.

And this leads me to remark that you need not in the least fear growing old. According to my experience, youth is by no means especially the season of happiness, as some people will tell you it is. No, on the contrary, I think I can assure you that if you will lead a useful, active, moderate life, you will be much happier than you are now, as you advance in life. True, you will have many more cares, fatigues, and sorrows; but you will be stronger to bear those sorrows, wiser to provide for the cares, and more fearless under all trial. If you choose your landmarks aright, you need fear none of those things which you shall suffer. Life is not made for suffering but for happiness. A quiet heart, a well-governed spirit, an active life and ready sympathies must lead you to it.

May you everyone attain it soon and easily.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS AND THE PUBLIC.

The growing desire for information on all subjects connected with Spiritualism and Free Religious thought has induced us to reserve a portion of our space for the publication of answers to questions, practical and Spiritual. We therefore invite the public to send us questions on any subject of general import, the most important of which will be submitted to the controlling spirit of an advanced local circle, and published with the answer, as space admits, those questions of minor importance which we feel ourselves competent to answer will be answered by the Editor. We wish it to be distinctly understood that no personal questions will receive attention.

THE CASTLEMAINE PRESS ON MR. POTTER'S SERMON.

The Rev. Mr. Potter Preached in St. Mary's Church, Hotham, yesterday on spiritism. In the course of the sermon as reported in the *Age*, he took occasion to remark that "The moral teaching of these Spiritists was just as peculiar as their doctrinal teaching. There was a tolerably general agreement amongst them in their contempt for the marriage state. Instead of marriage they went in for what magistrates and police, and most moral people called by another name. Like the Queen of Carthage, in the poem, the Spiritualists gave to it—

Some specious name,

To veil the crime, and sanctify the shame.

The moral and theological system of the Spiritualists might be summed up in two words, and these were whoredom and blasphemy." We do not profess, of course to repudiate these base charges on the part of the Spiritualists inasmuch as they are quite able to answer for themselves, but judging of all, by the teachings of one their leaders in Castlemaine and by the daily life and practice of those who profess themselves Spiritualists here, a more unfounded and Calumnious charge was never brought. We do not believe in table turning, rapping or planchette, but all the teachings we have seen in spiritual works inculcate fidelity to the marriage vows, and all morality. Mr. Potter has advanced a statement which we do not think he is able to support.—*Castlemaine Representative*, Feb. 8th, 1873.

THE MATERIALIZATION OF SPIRITS.

The materialization of spirits alluded to in our last as occurring in England, are increasing in frequency and intensity. The manifestations occurring through the mediumship of Messrs. Herne and Williams are some of the most extraordinary on record, not only have spirit forms been seen at their seances in bright gaslight, but more recently the forms have been visible at their daylight seances. The spirits speak in a voice audible to all present, a letter from the "Medium" of November 22nd, bearing upon another form of manifestation, developed through the mediumship of Mr. Williams, will be found in another column.

VICTORIA CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION.

The subject of Co-operation has now become of such world-wide importance that we cannot allow the opportunity to pass, which a recent social meeting of the above Association has presented, without a few remarks. The subject has long been one of hearsay, but this Association has brought it practically to our own door, and in a way that cannot fail to draw attention to its principles. It has only been in operation about five months, and we find that during that time they have, besides covering the working expenses during that period, paid off nearly all the preliminary expenses; something almost unique in the history of Co-operation, for all know that the first six months are always the most difficult to tide over.

The capital of the Association had only been £320, and yet in the five months they have done a business of £1450, thus turning it over nearly once in every month. This surely shows the vitality of the principle, as well as care on the part of the Directory. We hear it is the intention of the Directory to recommend an immediate extension of the business; but in what direction we are not informed; the probabilities point to the clothing department, and it has even been hinted that the union of the Needlewomen's Association with the Victorian is likely to take place.

This would be a wise measure, as unity is strength, and the two would have better opportunities, working together, for extending their usefulness. As a principle it is undoubtedly destined eventually to work a glorious reform among the working classes, and to effect a revolution amongst the mercantile community. Any lever that can be used to raise the toil-worn sons of care from their positions of dependence and want, to one of comparative ease and independence must be hailed by every well-wisher to humanity with pleasure, and this movement has already shown itself equal to this. Many

instances are already on record where those who have joined co-operative associations in England have, in a comparatively short time, placed themselves out of the pernicious influence of strikes, and the result of dishonest trading, the Insolvent Court.

The great struggle that is at present going on between the co-operative societies and trading communities in all parts of the world is one which every one must watch with deep interest because it is fraught with such vital importance to all; and this has been recently illustrated by no less a personage than one of the Directors in the Bank of England at a recent Board meeting. Having observed the signs of the times, and being endowed with more foresight than many of his confrères, he sees looming in the not far distant future a revolution that will affect even the existence of that ancient institution; and with the view of warding off the blow he wished to pass a resolution prohibiting their employees from joining Co-operative Associations.

The *Saturday Review* also acknowledges it to be a mighty engine at work, for it says:—"Co-operation is simply a reversal of the relation between the manager of a business and his workmen, for instead of the manager of a business hiring the workmen and taking his chance of the profits, the workmen hire him and take their chance of them. In this way Co-operation supplies a solution of the problem respecting labour and capital." And the *Saturday Review* is right. It has already effected this in many cases. Workmen will soon be brought to understand that by co-operating they will have the whole matter in their own hands, and wherever the employer resists their just demands they will rectify matters by becoming their own employers. We recommend the workmen of Australia to study the principles of Co-operation, and to assist in making the Victorian Co-operative Association a success.

AURELIA CO-OPERATIVE LAND AND LABOR ASSOCIATION.

Anent the subject of Co-operation, we have also had our attention directed to the above Association. In it we have the principles enunciated above, extended to agricultural pursuits.

This Association is to consist of a hundred families on the equality and co-operative principles, each individual member merging his interests in that of the whole; the estate to be held jointly and in equal shares by all the operative resident members who shall carry on such trade and manufactures as shall be most suitable to the locality, and the wants and capabilities of the members; the object of the Association being to secure to its members immunity from poverty, and a better state of social order and morals in which to bring up the rising generation.

The condition of membership is that the individuals must be harmonialists, which implies that "they must be living not only for the present, but for the future state of existence, and accept the leading principles of the harmonial philosophy," and that they are prepared to renounce all private trading, to devote themselves to the development of the harmonial principles in themselves and in all with whom they may be associated. Lest any doubt might arise as to the intentions of the Association with regard to the laws of the country, it is due to them to state that in all cases, *the marriage relations not excepted*, strict adherence to them will be observed; secondly, that each member shall pay £100, the price of a share in the Association, either in cash or by instalments, before he enters upon the estate, or if his labor is required by the Association, or the Association can utilize it, before he has paid up his full share, he can join, and pay up the remainder afterwards, the average value of his labor in the colony being taken as the scale of remuneration. From this £1 per week is to be deducted for home and board for himself and family, the balance to be placed to his credit to liquidate the debt on the unpaid up portion of the share; as soon as the share is paid up, but not till then, he becomes entitled to all the privileges of the Association.

The only difference between a full member and one who is resident, but paying up his share, is that he has

no vote and does not receive any of the surplus profits should a dividend be declared during such period.

We endorse this rule as most equitable and just, as it meets the case of those who may be most eligible members, but who may be unable to pay up their share for a long time, if left outside till it was done; further, the member is deprived of nothing, but has certain work provided for him which will enable him to clear it off in the shortest time, and still placing him in an independent position and on the same footing with other members. We understand that a large number of applications for membership are coming in, and the great difficulty which the Provisional Committee sees looming in the distance is, not how to procure members, but whom to choose out of the applicants. We hear of nothing being done as to starting, but we presume it will not be very long first, as the committees in various localities have been framing rules which are to be submitted to a general council who will finally decide upon them. The Committee which at present exists consists of both applicants for membership and friends to the movement. We hope the initiation of the Co-operative movement in this direction will be guarded and cautious. The movement is new here, and requires to be nursed, and we would urge upon its advocates to be in no hurry: better to be too cautious than be precipitate and endanger its success.

THE "POTTER" CONTROVERSY.

Close following on Mr. Potter's second lecture the *Age* of the 4th February had a leading article expressing astonishment at the serious charges brought against Spiritualism by that gentleman, and presuming he had the necessary evidence to justify them. This drew out Mr. Potter, who sends his evidence in the shape of an extract from A. J. Davis's *Great Harmonia*, vol. 4, being portion of a review of a work by H. C. Wright, and which he (Mr. Potter) claims to have Davis's endorsement to. On the following day a letter appeared from Mr. Terry, pointing out that Mr. Potter's justification was on a par with his offence, and quoting from A. J. Davis to prove that he did not endorse the paragraphs from H. C. Wright's book, upon which Mr. Potter based his accusation, at the same time commenting upon the disingenuous conduct of that gentleman in selecting isolated portions of a book which conveyed a totally different meaning to what they would with the context, or what the author intended. To this Mr. Potter replies that Mr. Terry's letter was not sufficiently explicit, and dealt only with the third question, viz., "Davis's endorsement of experimental marriages," but, finding Davis failing him he brings forward a quotation from Victoria Woodhull's *Lecture on Social Freedom*, which appears rather more to the point, and bringing in Davis and Wright tries to mix them, and exclaims in holy horror, "such is spiritist morality." Mr. Terry in his next explains that his reason for dealing more particularly with the last of Mr. Potter's quotations was that it embodied the whole gist of his argument, and says, "If I failed to deny in sufficiently explicit terms that Mr. Davis fully endorsed the statement quoted, I do so now distinctly, &c." After quoting further from Davis in proof of this denial Mr. Terry says:—"It is necessary to bear in mind (a fact which the rev. gentleman has apparently lost sight of) the work under review, 'Marriage and Parentage, by Henry Clarke Wright,' is not a spiritualistic or even a theological work, but a work on physiology and social science, the writer of it being a spiritualist, but not claiming inspiration for his book. It is given to the world as his individual ideas, for which he alone is responsible. With regard to Victoria C. Woodhull and her lecture on the Principles of Social Science, it was not a spiritualistic lecture, nor under the auspices of any spiritualistic body. Her views on social subjects and free love have given offence to the large body of spiritualists in America, Hudson, Tuttle, Emma Hardinge, Britten, and other eminent spiritualists having publicly repudiated them. Unless it can be shown that Mrs. Woodhull puts forward her social ideas authoritatively as the mouthpiece of the spiritualists, Mr. Potter has no right to father them upon that body. The spirit-

ualists are no more responsible for them than the Church of England would be for the social views or utterances of any of their members. I challenge the rev. gentleman to show that Mrs. Woodhull has ever put forward the views referred to as spiritualistic." The same issue contains a long and exhaustive letter from Mr. Tyerman, showing up in glowing colors the disingenuous conduct of Mr. Potter, and quoting a list of the leading spiritualistic literature, he challenges Mr. Potter to adduce a single line from them that will support his coarse allegation. In reply to these letters Mr. Potter begs the question, and goes on reiterating that A. J. Davis teaches that if married people cease to love one another, either or both of them may marry again, and asks the questions—Do Mr. Davis and Mr. Wright teach that? Yes or no? And does Mr. Wright affirm further that the test of true marriage is experiment? Yes or no? And does Mr. Davis admit the truth of the statement although he regrets it? Mr. Terry's reply to these questions was not published, as appears from his letter of the 13th, in which he complains of the suppression of his letter, which was a distinct and conclusive answer to Mr. Potter, and which showed, firstly, that Davis did not endorse H. C. Wright's book, which he had under review; and secondly, that H. C. Wright's book does not profess to be and is not a spiritualistic work, but purely scientific and social. These two facts took the whole of the ground from under Mr. Potter's feet, and unless he could find some new ground his assertions had no basis in fact.

Free love was no part of spiritualism, nor was it peculiar to spiritualists in America. Its leading advocates (with the exception of Mrs. Woodhull) were not spiritualists, and her open advocacy of free love principles had given offence to large numbers of spiritualists, although she had studiously advocated them distinct from spiritualism. He maintained further that the social views of any individual spiritualist, unless they could be shown to be the outcome of his religion, had no bearing upon the subject of spiritualism, and it was unfair and disingenuous to drag them forward to its prejudice. This closed the correspondence in the *Age*, except that in answer to an editorial note Messrs. Terry, Tyerman, and Ross, gave their views on the marriage question, which were published on the 15th ult. During the period occupied by the above discussion the war was being carried on in the columns of the *Argus*, Mr. Bright and Mr. Potter being the combatants (the subject being Mr. Potter's lectures), in the course of which Mr. Bright not only exposed the fallacy of his opponent's statements, but convicted him of literary trickery. Those who have not read the correspondence, and have access to a file of the *Argus*, will find it well worthy of perusal.

THE FOOLISHNESS OF GOD, WISER THAN MEN.

1st Chap., of 1st Corinthians, 25th, to 29th, Verse.—

The sentiments which the apostle wishes to express are conveyed with much force by the use of a figure, known to grammarians as a syllepsis, by which we reject the usual signification of the words used, and see beneath the surface the meaning intended to be conveyed. For there is, neither foolishness in God, nor weakness, yet the use of such phrases conveys more light into a controversy than one can conceive who has never been forced to use odd expressions to bring one's meaning clearly before the minds of his hearers.

The dealings of God with the human race are to the thoughtless, foolishness; and even the devout thinker must take much in a spirit of simple trust, for we only see in part.

A very great and good man, Robertson the historian, puts the case thus, "Not a step can we take in any direction without perceiving the most extraordinary traces of design; and the skill everywhere conspicuous, is calculated, in so vast a proportion of instances, to promote the happiness of living creatures and especially of our own kind, that we can feel no hesitation in concluding that, if we knew the whole scheme of Providence, every part would be found in harmony with a plan of absolute benevolence." Let us adopt these

sentiments. Let us be patient; if this life comprised the sum of our existence, the trouble and vicissitude of earth experience would be meaningless cruelty, men chafe under what seems the monstrous tyranny of misfortune, even if they do not go so far as Dean Swift did, and keep their birthdays as days of mourning; and yet it is necessary in these days for moral teachers to assert with more than ordinary vehemence "that it is good to live"—The gentle and patient moral hero who has just gone from amongst us was never tired of asserting that "what we call death the angels call birth" and when this knowledge enters into, and becomes one of the convictions of the soul, then everything becomes intelligible, then we "run with patience the race that is set before us," then we learn the use of virtue, and the virtue of endurance; then we realize that we cannot escape from the God within, that neither pistol nor rope can take away our life, that eternal undying individuality is the destiny of each one of us, that denial will not alter this fact, that ignoring it will not bring ease, that we must face it as inevitable, and to be faced at some time or another, and when this solemn conviction enters in and takes possession of our better nature then we learn why

" 'Tis only noble to be good,

why it is that

"True hearts are more than coronets,

"And simple faith than Norman blood."

The spread of these views will be the end of the world, that is to say, the end of the love of the world, when the harvest will be reaped, and when the reapers will be angels. But the material world can never disappear out of space, as modern Jeremiahs teach, matter is eternal, but continually entering into fresh combinations. Now, as notwithstanding my text there is no foolishness in God, there will never be an end to the world, although if we take the letter of Scripture nothing is more certain. But "the letter killeth, the spirit giveth life."

Taking then, the spirit of this saying that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men" what do we understand by it? Something impartial, absolutely impartial in its operation, "something" which as Pope says, "makes what happiness we justly call consist; not in the good of one, but all." The foolishness of God is no respecter of persons, it does not go hat in hand to the rich and learned, and plead for justice for the struggling masses of the people, it does not do this, because it is wiser than men," it opens men's minds to a sense of right, it takes a David from tending his father's sheep, and "highly exalteth him" to be King over Israel, it shines upon the world through the eyes of a carpenter's son born in a manger, it puts "down the mighty from their seats, and exalteth them of low degree."

I marvel at the evidence of inattention to the leading features of human history, which is displayed by public writers in the present day

The facts are patent, that every great reform has had what is called an ignoble origin, that the foolishness which is so wise, resides not in the few but in the many, and always spreads from beginnings, in themselves contemptible. Is not "the foolishness of God" apparent in the foundation of Christianity by the instrumentality of one of whom it was said, "How knoweth this man letters having never learned." illiterate and yet serviceable, poor and despised and yet making many rich! "The foolishness of God!"

What a pity that the genius of Shakespeare should have lodged in the brain of the son of a butcher, a reckless lad, prosecuted for poaching, subsequently holding the horses of "his betters" at the doors of theatres, thankful for the coppers, the gentlemen (?) might fling to the needy lad. Again, the foolishness of God!

Take the reformation. How dreadful to think of the origin of Martin Luther, the son of a common miner, a lad who, when at school at Eisenach, paid his board and his school fees with money which he earned by singing ballads in the streets, and this was "the monk that shook the world." Once more, the foolishness of God!

To think that opera should have been established as a valuable civiliser and refining system of

public instruction by the illegitimate son of a common soldier—Metastasio; to think that the liberties of England should have been preserved during the revolution by "so odious and illiterate a character" as Oliver Cromwell; to think that Milton should be his clerk and defender; to see Italy liberated by so humble a man as Garibaldi; or, further back, to find America discovered by the son of a poor wool-comber; and New South Wales, and through it Australia generally, secured for our race by a grocer's apprentice, afterwards Captain James Cook. But why multiply instances of "the foolishness of God." If you take the real benefactors of mankind, from the hero of Nazareth down to his loving disciple, Charles Dickens, the novelist, pasting on labels on pots of blacking; if you consider, even in the most superficial and cursory manner the antecedents of the agents in the great work of human redemption and national elevation, you will find them striking instances of the truth of my text. "That God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise (self-styled so), and the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty," and so it is in our own day.

"The foolishness of God" has recently been made apparent in this city, by putting forward as an advocate of His truth, a high-souled American, a warm-hearted follower of God's Truth, one to whom you gave that cup of cold water which will in no wise lose its reward. He has gone from among us, and in all probability will not return, and therefore I have no hesitation in saying for myself, that I expect hereafter to find out that he has in his own way done as great a service to Victoria as the framers of the Education Bill in theirs. His heart was set upon one duty—

- "To rise and battle bravely, with dauntless moral might
- "In the holy cause of Freedom and the triumph of the Right;
- "For by this simple standard shall all at last be tried,
- "And not by earthly glory, or the works of human pride."

"The foolishness of God" is wiser than men, and the cause which the Spiritual Pilgrim advocated, and for which we suffer obloquy, is that identical foolishness, that "weakness of God" in which I rejoice, and which will yet, I trust, bring to nought the things that are. Spiritualism is the "weakness of God;" nevertheless it will make a terrible commotion in the world yet. Let us abide the issue of events, the leaders of other systems of religion have no practical influence worth speaking of, they failed in their attempt to prevent the spread of free education in this community. The utter unreliability of their prognostications on that occasion show that they are without foresight as a rule, without capacity, save in a few exceptions in the metropolis, and without power even if they had foresight, therefore they may live to learn that Spiritualism, which to them is foolishness, is to all who understand it, the wisdom of God and the power of God! Being such, we know, to use a Scripture metaphor, that the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. The public attention is being given to it, the teachings conveyed by the books and pamphlets scattered broadcast through the community, will not fall on stony ground in every instance. The "foolishness of God" has a way, peculiarly its own, of overturning the wisdom of the world; but it must have fair play, it requires time, the leaven must be allowed to work within the lump. What does it matter whether people avow themselves Spiritualists or become convinced and remain silent? It is not everyone who can afford to fly in the face of popular feeling. If the Clergy tacitly drop such doctrines as the Atonement in one Church, in another the Real Presence, Eternal Torment in a third; and in all, the notion that God hates our actions inasmuch as He hates sin; if they cease teaching these errors the cause of Spiritual truth will prosper, and the further men progress into the light the better will they be able to see that God uses sin to convert sinners, that as there is such a thing, it is simply temporary educational discomfort, that He has made all things, sin and the Devil included, and loves everything that he has made, sin and the Devil included, everything, everywhere. We all need to learn, that what man calls evil is undeveloped good, that evil never had an origin, that

good never had an origin, that good and evil are the body and spirit of the Deity, who is from everlasting; the positive and negative in Nature, that one without the other would be day without night, light without shade, labour without rest, and life without variety.

From these simple truths they would proceed to find out that Heaven means spiritual development proceeding from within; that vice—as its derivation implies—is simply a defect or blemish, a wrinkle in the spiritual or moral wrapper, which further development will remove; that, consequently, it is an antique barbarism to take away the life of a criminal, because the violence hinders the reformation of the culprit by preventing his development in the flesh. That punishment inflicted as a preventive is absolutely without effect as the criminal statistics of every country under the sun abundantly testify.

When the wise ones of the world condescend to take a hint from the "foolishness of God," they will pass sentences of compulsory restitution upon all offenders against property, and murderers and other brutal offenders against the human person, will be regarded as dangerous animals, requiring discipline rather than destruction, and whose wrong doing cannot be righted by retaliation and legalised revenge. When clairvoyance and psychometry become the invaluable handmaids of Justice, then the value of evidence will be ascertained scientifically and expeditiously, and a lie and a true statement will become as easily distinguishable as good manners are from bad, coarseness from refinement, or a shilling from a sovereign.

Can these things be? Yes! The "foolishness of God" will bring it all about, the doctrines of Spiritualism, base things of the world, now considered, and things which are despised—as the Saviour was—will bring to nought the things that are. The world has yet to learn that the interests of every man and every woman are bound up inseparably with the interests of every other man and every other woman, that cruelty to the extremities of the social body reacts on the heart, that as a man with the gout tenderly cares for his feet, so a community afflicted with social evil should tenderly care for the diseased members that suffer most. In the future, it will be admitted that no stain, no smear of temptation or yielding to momentary weakness, should shut out the erring from the forgiveness of the righteous! The righteous! God help us, who are they? As a matter of fact, "saints are always hardest on sinners," and understand the least of the real meaning of Charity, or as Beaumont and Fletcher have satirically inquired—

- "Where is honor safe? Not with the righteous.
- They feed upon opinions, errors, dreams,
- And make them truths.
- They draw a nourishment out of defamings,
- Grow upon disgraces.
- And when they see a virtue fortified; strongly;
- Above the battery of their tongues;
- Oh, how they cast to sink it."

Slander and abuse are the wholesome and necessary manure, required to promote the vigorous growth of Truth. The moral world is a harvest field, from which successive crops have been taken, so that periodically the phosphates become exhausted—the fig tree ceases to bear, the salt loses its savour, the yield falls off, inasmuch that, to use an illustration of the prophet Daniel, it becomes necessary at times, that "the people be cut in pieces, and their houses be made a dunghill." This has been done in every age in different ways; at one time when moral stagnation set in upon the world, the favourite practice was crucifixion, then the Roman candles came into vogue, after these came the Crusades, then the invention of gunpowder, which agent, Buckle asserts, has done more for the civilization of mankind than all the rest put together. After the invention of gunpowder Christians learned to kill one another with much greater ease and comfort, but the wolfish shepherds of the world's flocks ran too much risk in the battle field, so after a while they stayed at home and roasted dissenters "for the love of God."

Prescott states, that during the 18 years of Torquemada's ministry, 105,000 people were put to death by his orders; 3,000 people suffered in Holland; happily for us Queen Elizabeth took the first decided steps about this

time, to establish religious toleration in England. Nevertheless, in 1611, Hallam says, two men were burnt to death, their names, Legat and Wightman; the first was burned by order of King, Protestant Bishop of London, and the other by order of Neile, one of Bishop Selwyn's predecessors in the see of Lichfield. Since then, English soil has never been refreshed by martyr's blood. The soil soon became impoverished, and the Revolution under Cromwell was of good service in manuring it up again; but, since his time, crop after crop has been taken off the moral surface, and no return made, the sacrifices have only enriched foreign and colonial soil, therefore, those who are afflicted with clear vision can see a state of things existing, in which by famine, pestilence, or the sword, the people of Great Britain must once more be cut to pieces, and their houses turned into dunghills.

This is the way the "foolishness of God" brings to nought the things that are. Just before the Revolution in France, 80 years ago, the farmers of the State revenues, sleek, self-satisfied, and stupid, flattered themselves that "things in general were settled for ever." In my short experience, two mighty empires have been overthrown and humbled in the dust, Austria and France, and some who study the "foolishness of God" in history, venture so far as to think, that in much snubbed Great Britain, things in general are by no means "settled for ever." But then they only talk the "foolishness of God."

I tell you that the historical pathway of moral light is beaten in blood and suffering into the surface of the cornfields of time. Along that dreadful track the two witnesses Truth and Justice have sorrowfully travelled, clothed in sackcloth, witnessing on either side, the howling destructiveness of wolves in sheep's clothing.

In this young country Truth and Justice come and stand upon their feet, come with the records of their observations in the moral wilderness of the past, and the burden of their song is this—"Beware of wolves in sheep's clothing, keep clear of the professors of the religion, which when powerful, has proved to be that of hate, brutality, and violence. "By their fruits ye shall know them." What has been, may be again, therefore, give no man or body of men any interest whatever, in maintaining any particular set of opinions. In God's name, let every one think what seems pleasing in his own eyes, and if you would be happy, be free! Tolerate everything. Opposition, abuse, slander, and persecution have proved in the old world a rich manure, too rich, indeed, for truth to flourish in, but too weak to smother it altogether.

Give the truth a fair amount of slanderous misrepresentation, it needs it, "dig about it and dung it," there will always be a number of unpleasant people to do the dirty work, but we need not emulate those who are unseavoursy, the "foolishness of God" requires their services, and the "foolishness of God is wiser than men."

Just at this time, and in this city, a few tender leaves of spiritual truth are beginning to show themselves above the surface, which recent farming operations have covered with very useful literary guano. The smell is not pleasant, but it will wear off, and that from which it springs will be of the greatest service to our farming operations.

You will pardon my speaking in a parable. It is to me the easiest and the clearest means I can think of, to make my meaning understood. I speak to an exceptional audience,—an audience whose intelligence and moral courage is far above the average, where every mind is awake, and in a greater or less degree illumined by spiritual light.

Mark the words of Jesus, "Many that are first shall be last, and the last first." This despised thing, Spiritualism, draws down upon the heads of people of the highest character the most insulting epithets, leads professors of a religion founded upon two commandments—Love to God, and Love to Man—to forget their professions in their hatred of the "foolishness of God," producing in the eyes of friends of the people, as newspapers should be, the saddest mental obliquity, and causing gentlemen calling themselves Christian to direct more contumely at Mr. Peebles than at Dr. Murray.

Let me ask in the next place—Is the sup-

pression of vice by precept possible? I think not. Vice will never be diminished except by changing the hearts of the people. A very slight investigation of the ethics of Spiritualism will convince every impartial writer having the interest of his readers at heart, that there is in it, a very powerful redemptive principle, which is worth a trial. For if he is honest, in desiring to elevate the tone of society, he should welcome any system, which is obtaining the support of all classes of the people.

Now, Churchianity does not do this. It has lost its power to attract, and the clear sighted can see it gradually wasting away. Wanting men and money, and neither come forward. Well, it has become too worldly wise, that is one reason; salt which was once good has lost its savor, "and it must be cast out and trodden under the feet of men." The wisdom of the world, which is theirs now, is foolishness with God, and directly the wise things of the world become mighty they are upset by "the foolishness of God." All this is very dreadful, but it is very true. It is the principal lesson which history teaches, and over and above all, one great truth reaches down from the grandest ages of antiquity; that the Spiritual in Nature is greater than the material, that notwithstanding His apparent foolishness, God is really the wisest, notwithstanding His apparent weakness, God is really the strongest, "And when poor human hearts rebel, He holds out longest."

These are the principles underlying that curious expression I have chosen to build a discourse upon, and these are the principles for which we should be prepared to suffer, steadfastly, doggedly, obstinately, and continuously; for with certain knowledge, a clear conscience, and clean hands, we can well afford to "endure with patience" the calumny which must of necessity be heaped upon the heads of all who love the name of Christ, so that their sincerity may be tested. "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, rejoice and be exceeding glad." This is Spiritualism, this is true Christianity, this is the foolishness of God which is wiser than men. Remember; millions have laid down their lives for the truth, who desired to see the things which we see and had not seen them, and to hear the things which we hear and had not heard them, who walked by faith, and not as we do, by actual sight and knowledge, who held their lives ready to let them go at a moment's notice, and, if we who know, that when our earthly tabernacle is dissolved, we shall be better off, if we who know these things, cannot stand by our principles, insisting upon the right of private judgment in a free country,—then, human nature will have degenerated by change of scene, and better conditions of civil liberty and religious freedom, will prove unfavorable to the growth of moral courage.

I will not believe it. I prefer to think that by showing a firm and unflinching front to the fashionable views which just at present seem mighty, we may, by the "foolishness of God," and the goodness of our cause, be enabled finally to overturn them; for our faith does not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of that God, who is a Spirit.

Spiritualists even in this country are a mighty army. Every sincere Roman Catholic is a Spiritualist, and would, by me, be welcomed as such. They communicate in spirit with saints and the departed, and this principle of spiritual truth has upheld their church in ages past, and will strengthen it in ages yet to come. They also hold the rational doctrine of purgatory, or gradual progress of all (however) bad, which Spiritualism corroborates; and if Roman Catholics were as wise now as they will yet become, they would embrace spiritism without delay.

In the other bodies Spiritualism is nearly equal to a profession of Spiritualism, for to believe in a God is to believe in a Spirit, and to believe in a Spirit is to be a Spiritist. I claim the whole body of church-goers as Spiritists, because if they are not Spiritists they have no business to go praying to a Spirit. If they go to church for form's sake, being all the time negationists, having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof, then the denial of Spirit intercourse, is, by them, a publication of their own hypocrisy. They can take

whichever horn of the dilemma they please: they are either Spiritists or hypocrites.

The noble army of free-thinkers will furnish reinforcements competent to strike terror into the bosoms of those who shun inquiry, and there is no class of men, in my opinion, in this community, more deserving of the sympathy and gratitude of Spiritualists, than the able and intelligent members of the Free Discussion Society, who have been, for over two years, removing prejudice, spreading the principles of toleration, and preparing the ground for the seed of Spiritual promise. And free-thinkers do not surrender their liberty by satisfying themselves that there is a life beyond this. If life does not end with death, free thinkers who now deny it, will not suffer by the addition of another fact to the sum of their knowledge. If they cannot discover it to be a fact, they had much better deny what they have not yet ascertained, and go on widening the field of religious thought in other ways, for a man to be a Spiritualist must have a certain knowledge of his power to rise from the dead; he must feel his individual responsibility for his actions; he must give up all ideas of annihilation; he must abandon all hope of God requiring one man to bear the consequence of what others do in the body; he must discover the laws of Nature, and obey them; he must lead an upright, honest, fearless life, bearing such crosses as may fall to his lot, bravely, calmly, although the way seem long; to learn that a time must come, a happy time to look forward to, when the tempests of life shall have passed away. And we shall each of us stand in perfect health, and everlasting thankfulness, on the threshold of our Eternal Home—then

There, the worn and heavy laden
Their burdens shall lay down.
There, crosses borne in meekness
At length shall win the crown.
And lonely hearts that famished
For sympathy and love,
Shall find a free affection
In the angel home above.

MR. J. M. PEEBLES.

We have a letter from Mr. Peebles, and news from Dunedin to February 10th, up to which time we find he had delivered four highly successful lectures, two of them in the Queen's Theatre, which was crowded in every part. Both the daily papers give fair reports of the lectures, and brother Peebles, points in his letter to the striking contrast between them and the first Melbourne reports. He is evidently getting a fairer start at Dunedin than he had here, and we may therefore reasonably expect he will make greater proportionate headway during his stay there. The *Otago Witness*, of February 8th, besides an acknowledgement of Mr. Peebles' ability as a public speaker, has an article on Spiritualism, from which we extract the following:—

"Amongst the social movements of the age, the spread of Spiritualism is certainly the most conspicuous, if not the most important. The specialities of this creed are curious enough to render it well worthy of study as a phenomenon of human nature. A little consideration will lead to the conviction that it is not by any means an excrescent growth. Whatever we may think of it, we must admit that it is a natural outcome from the intellectual tendencies of the civilised portion of the race as they have recently manifested themselves. The orthodox are everywhere complaining that loose and unsettled ways of thinking prevail to an unwonted extent, especially amongst the younger portion of the adult community. There has for a long time past been a great drifting from old moorings. The great stream of the intellectual activity of mankind, which we believe to be always flowing in one direction, and that towards increased 'perfection' of mind and manners, increased control over nature and circumstance, towards higher and better things than those that have been before—this stream, either by its onward progress, or by one of those eddies which are always found where great masses are in movement, has overflown the embankments of orthodoxy, not in Christendom only, but wherever any

great religious system holds the minds of masses of men. But the average human mind, however bolstered up by intellectual pride, cannot long exist without a religion. The assault upon orthodoxy has everywhere been purely intellectual in its character. It has prepared the way for the advent of new creeds, with which it has the least possible sympathy, and which will in their turn be attacked, and undermined by it. These are, nevertheless, natural products of that state of things which the progress of what it is the fashion to call 'the Modern Spirit' has brought about. Two hundred years ago Spiritualism of the present pattern would have found no standing ground anywhere in the countries which are now full of its disciples, and strange to think that what we are taught to believe has been the finest work of all the greatest intellects of this century and its predecessor, should have helped to prepare the way for this thing. Yet there cannot be the least doubt that this is true.

Other equally decided evidences of a reaction against the influence of the 'Modern Spirit' have been observable during the short period which is included in the annals of Spiritualism. These have been chiefly visible within the pale of the attacked orthodoxy. The spread of Ritualism, and of the return to the manners and ideas of the early Christian Church in England, the vigorous re-organisation of what we may call the purely Papal party in the Roman Catholic Church, the re-awakening of fanatical orthodoxy amongst some of the Mahomedan populations, are all direct results in the form of reaction of the assaults which modern scepticism and criticism have made on the cherished strongholds of every faith. But Spiritualism lying without the pale of orthodoxy though it does, is assuming much larger dimensions than any of the other forms in which this reactionary spirit has manifested itself. It may not as yet have the same social power, even in America, as those developments of reaction which adhere to established and time-honoured forms. But it possesses elements of strength which they have not, appealing more largely than they do to what is weakest in the human soul, and therefore most common to the race. The novelty of some of its positions, which in its earliest infancy was a source of weakness to it, exciting incredulity and ridicule, becomes an advantage as soon as it has overpassed the first stage of growth. Like other religions, it claims for itself all that is purest in that Morality which the experience of ages has taught to man as his highest wisdom. Like others, it lays claim to the surest knowledge of the Deity, and the highest views of His attributes and essence. Like others it courts persecution, delights in polemics, meekly damns its adversaries, and claims for its saints rewards of ravishing delight. But it has the advantage of them all in its newness; and in one respect, reactionary though it be, it has wonderfully adapted itself to the temper of that 'Modern Spirit' which has helped to evoke it. It is as vague as a creed well can be. Some of its disciples indeed appear to claim that all its definitions are yet in the future—that it is not yet wholly known what forms they will take, or how much of such protoplasm of doctrine as a SMITH or a PEEBLES delights to unfold, is to be absorbed into the fully developed Spiritualism towards which the world is advancing."

It is as yet uncertain whether Mr. Peebles will revisit Victoria on his way to China.

Just before going to press we received further news from Mr. Peebles to Feb. 17th, from which we find he had maintained his popularity at Dunedin, in spite of the opposition of the Church party. In his letter of the above date, he informs us of his intention to visit Christchurch to lecture, and afterwards the Mining districts. It is not probable that we shall see the "Pilgrim" again in Melbourne, as it is his intention to proceed direct from New Zealand to China, by a vessel leaving there about the 25th of March. The following is from the *Otago Daily Times*, of Feb. 17th:—

"The third of the series of Sunday evening lectures or sermons, by Mr. J. M. Peebles, was given at the Queen's Theatre yesterday evening. The Theatre was crowded

and the audience listened throughout with attention. Several members of the committee were seated on the stage, there being no chairman. The overture was "Native Worth," from the Creation. A poem by Dr. Dunn followed, and after a hymn and invocation, Mr. Peebles commenced his discourse, which was upon a text from St. John xviii. 38, "What is Truth?" Every man, he contended, had a right to decide for himself what was true. The great error had been in taking the ancients for authority in regard to man's duty and destination. He could discover no similarity between the life of the humble Nazarene, and the sectarian Christianity of the present day, which was not by any means in accordance with the teachings of Christ. It was this kind of Christianity that he attacked, and men in Dunedin who could not discriminate between the pure and positive religion of Jesus, in which the lecturer believed, and that persecuting sectarian Christianity, were, if not hopelessly imbecile, at best but the postponed possibilities of men. Spiritualism was, he said, in perfect harmony with the inspirations of the Bible. Its general principles were: Reverence for God—a present communion with spirits—retribution for wrong-doing—the attainment of happiness through obedience to Divine law, and the eternal progress or unfoldment of all human intelligences. After a benediction, Mr. Peebles proceeded to answer a number of inquiries which had been addressed to him in writing. He then said that in consideration of a constant fire from masked batteries, under fictitious names, he felt justified in stating that he was not only willing, but exceedingly anxious, to meet any of the clergy in an oral discussion, of not less than four evenings, involving the principles of Spiritualism and sectarian theology, a small charge to be made, and the proceeds to be given to the Benevolent Institution.—(Applause.) A hymn entitled "All hail, Sublime," closed the proceedings.

THE London "Times" of December 26, 1872, has a long article on the subject of Spiritualism. The Editor and a friend have attended seances, and seen inexplicable things; their conclusion being that the subject is worthy of, and demands, thorough investigation. We may probably review the article in our next.

RECLAIMED. (Continued.)

"Now," I said, "you call me Mary, what must I call you, Mrs. Grimes?" "No, call me Martha, for that is my name, and when I meet you again I will tell you of my history and that of my dear child."

Then she went away, and I woke up and found you were up and gone. Now, William, you know why I asked you about dreams. I have thought about it all day, and when I see that poor child walking about in that unsightly dress, I feel ashamed of myself.

Well, my dear, I consider that a very remarkable dream; but I should not like to give my opinion about it until you have a little more information to guide you. You say that your interesting visitor from the other world promised to see you again, and give you her history and that of little Grim. If she should come again and give you such information as can be authenticated, why then, I should not only be inclined to believe in dreams, but in the possibility of departed spirits being able to make themselves understood by the good and the pure, and those with whom they have affinity.

But, my dear husband, suppose she never comes again, or if what she says cannot be authenticated?

Then, Mary, it will be time enough to form an opinion. For the present, let us be kind to the child, as this will be acting in accordance with the request of your wingless angel, and if it should turn out only a dream we have nothing to regret, but if otherwise we shall have the approval of intelligences in a higher sphere, as well as that of our own consciences. . . . That cow and calf should go down to the sale-yard to-morrow. I think I had better take Grim with me in the cart and get him a suit of clothes.

Yes, do, by all means; but if I had known you

intended to take her (the cow) to-morrow, I would have kept her up all night and not have milked her.

Then, Mary, I am very glad you did not know; for I do believe it is very cruel to stock the cattle in that way.

But we have always done it, have we not? and you did not say you thought it cruel before, for you know they always make a better price when the bag is a good size.

It is quite true what you say; but when I approved of stocking the cows for market, I was ignorant of the suffering it inflicted on the poor beast, and the danger to the health and even life of those who might drink the milk after a cow had been stocked for a day or two. I have learned, my dear Mary, that it is an act of inhumanity to stock the cattle, and I say once for all, I will not allow it to be done any more.

But suppose you get ten shillings or a pound less for the cow than you would otherwise have done, how should you like that?

If that must of necessity be the case, I must suffer the loss; better have a little less money than be guilty of an act of inhumanity.

Early the next morning Grim and the calf were placed in the cart, and William drove them to the sale-yards, with the old brown mare in the shafts, and the cow followed behind the cart looking at her calf as she went along. I have no doubt she would be able to walk to Melbourne all the better for her limp bag; but I know the buyers will say she is a poor milker, and only give a low price. Well, said I, to myself when they were gone, if I was William I would sooner bring her back than I would give her away. I know from experience she is a very good cow, only for that habit of continually breaking down the fences and getting into other people's paddocks and gardens, and then into the pound. Sure enough, just as I wished he would do he did—brought both cow and calf back.

Why, Mary, what do you think I was bid for that cow? No more than half its value.

Just as I thought; I suppose you will be willing to stock another time. Are people to give their property away for the sake of principle? Why, Grim, I hardly knew you; that suit looks very nice now, but how will it be if it should want washing? The tea is ready, so you will both come in when you have put the cattle up. Well, Grim, I said what do you think of Melbourne.

Oh, I've seen Melbourne before, said Grim; but when I seed it to-day was different to when I seed it before.

Saw it, you should say; not seed it.

When I sawd it before I was frightened to be seed by daylight.

Not sawed, but seen. I am afraid they did not teach you to speak properly at the school.

I was in the scrub by the river, and I met with some other lads and they gave me something to eat, and said if I would go with them and do as they did, I should share their money and grub. They said that they would take me to the theatre at night, and show me where I could snooze with them, there's no bobbies comes down here, and we get lots of things off those ships as lie in the river. I was very glad to get some palls and something to eat, and when night come we all four went to the theatre, the biggest lad paying for us all to the gallery; and it was fine, I never seen anything so grand. When the play was over, we all come down to the river again, and walked a long way down the side till we came to a little boat lying on the swamp, which we all helped to push into the river, and then paddled to the other side. We walked a long way till we came to a very nice place with plenty of grass and bushy trees, and there we met two men as the other boys knowed. One was a big tall man, and the other was a little man, and his voice was like a woman's. When we come up to them, they was sittin' under a bush, with boughs of the trees brought round, so we could not see them till we looked under and lifted the boughs up. "That you, Flab? who's the fourth?" says the big un. "Oh, that's a new spring we picked up on the river bank." "Bring him in then, and strike a match and let's see what he's like.

(To be Continued.)

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